



# Governance Structure of the School Policy

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## Rationale

The VRQA Minimum Standards for School Registration includes a standard concerning school governance. This standard is as follows:

*The governance of a school must be structured to enable the school to develop its strategic direction, effectively manage its finances and fulfil its legal obligations.*

## Purpose

The purpose of this statement is to demonstrate that the St John's Catholic Parish Primary School's governance is properly structured in relation to its strategic, financial and legal obligations.

## Statement

### a) Governance of Schools in the Diocese of Melbourne

#### Governance and Strategic Planning

For primary schools, the canonical authority is the Parish through the Parish Priest. For Catholic secondary schools, the canonical authority is the Diocese, a Parish, a group of Parishes (Association of Canonical Administrators), or a consortium of any of these which includes a Religious Institute.

Catholic primary school boards are advisory boards not canonical authorities; their role is to support the school's mission and the spiritual and educational development of students through contributing to school planning and policies.

The canonical authorities of Diocesan schools are also the employers of principals and staff in their schools. Employers of Catholic school staff delegate to principals, the leadership and management responsibility for all operational matters related to the school.

Online and print publications on CEVN can assist Catholic primary school boards to perform their functions.



## Financial

The school's Annual Financial Statement (AFS) to the CECV includes details of receipt and expenditure of funds. From the AFS, schools complete the Australian Government's online Financial Questionnaire. Refer CEVN/Data Collection.

Catholic primary schools are guided by the *Financial and Administrative Procedures Manual*.

## Legal

The document *Legal Issues in Schools*, available on CEVN, advises schools on a wide range of legal issues. Specific CECV and diocesan policies also address legal requirements, such as privacy, criminal records checks, Working with Children checks, use of the internet, enrolment, employment of staff, sexual harassment, and Child Safe Standards.

The CECV Industrial Relations Unit provides professional advice on employment and industrial relations matters.

These may be accessed through CEVN and should be consulted for legal or procedural matters not specifically covered by Catholic sector policies or advice.

## Resources

- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, *Financial and Administrative Procedures Manual, Catholic Primary Schools – Revised September 2009, updated June 2015*, under Documents/Melbourne Archdiocese/Finance in Catholic Education Victoria Network (CEVN) [www.admin.cevn](http://www.admin.cevn)
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, Version 1-2016, Notes to Accompany the Annual Financial Statement, Data Collection/Annual Financial Statement in Catholic Education Victoria Network (CEVN) [www.admin.cevn](http://www.admin.cevn)
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria 2003, *Legal Issues in Schools* (under revision), under Documents/Melbourne Archdiocese/Legal Matters in Catholic Education Victoria Network (CEVN) [www.admin.cevn](http://www.admin.cevn)
- Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/referenceguide/default.htm> or through Schools Reference Guide under Links in Catholic Education Victoria Network (CEVN) [www.admin.cevn](http://www.admin.cevn)



## **a) The Governance Structure of St John's School**

The governing body of the school is the canonical authority which has jurisdiction over the school. The canonical authority has responsibility for authorising the governance structure of the school and its management. The canonical authority for the school is Fr Joel Peart. The school is advised by a Council which acts in an advisory capacity and is not the canonical authority.

The School Advisory Council is appointed by the canonical authority (Fr Joel) to assist the Parish to achieve its goals for education. In a spirit of cooperation, the canonical authority, principal and representatives of staff, parents and parish, act as a forum for discussion on matters concerning the operation of the school. In this way, the School Advisory Council is a prominent sign of an educative community which honours the importance, the richness and the responsibility of all participants, in particular the primacy of parents, in the education of young children.

The primary task of the School Advisory Council is to advise, assist and support the canonical authority (Fr Joel) and the principal in the efficient management and development of the school as a Catholic school, in accordance with the vision and educational goals of the school, parish and diocese.

The Advisory Council takes up its role through its contribution to school decision-making and through its participation in activities that uphold the mission of Catholic education, as expressed in the vision and mission statements of the school.

More specifically, the functions of the Advisory Council are as follows:

- a) Assisting in the formulation and review of the school's mission, priorities, goals and policy in conjunction with canonical authority Fr. Joel, principal, school staff and parents and in accordance with the priorities and policies of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and the Diocese of Melbourne;
- b) Assisting the principal to promote the Catholic ethos of the school;
- c) Assisting the principal, in an advisory capacity, to develop an appropriate curriculum for the school;
- d) Enabling individual parents to have a voice by being able to speak on educational matters through their School Advisory Council year level representatives;
- e) Advising as required in the preparation of the school budget, school fees and the regular monitoring of the school's financial operation;
- f) Maintaining and developing the facilities and infrastructure of the school
- g) Planning for the future;
- h) Assisting in the selection of a lay principal in accordance with diocesan



guidelines when such an appointment is being made;

- i) Working in collaboration with school parent groups;
- j) Celebrating the integration of faith and life through parish and school experiences;
- k) Developing school-community relationships and encouraging home-school interaction;
- l) Facilitating the integration of new families to the school community;
- m) Developing local strategies for the promotion of Catholic education;
- n) Making annual educational reports to the parish and school community;
- o) Assisting the principal with the pastoral care of members of the school community.

### **School-Based Supporting Documents**

- a) Constitution of the School Advisory Council
- b) Four Year School Improvement Plan
- c) Annual School Action Plan

### **Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four year review cycle or as required.